

Cholera infantum

Oct. 23d.

No. 10

Mrs Harrison - No. 216 Walnut St. 8/9.

Mr. Rich^d. Short - Virginia -

admitted March 6th 1821.

18th June 1811

My Dear Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th inst.

and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities.

I am, Sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. B. [Signature]

Enclosed I have the pleasure to send you a copy of the report of the Committee.

I am, Sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. B. [Signature]

Ans

Inaugural Dissertation

for the

Degree

of

Doctor of Medicine

Submitted to the Examination

of the

Trustees and Medical Profession

of the

University of Pennsylvania.

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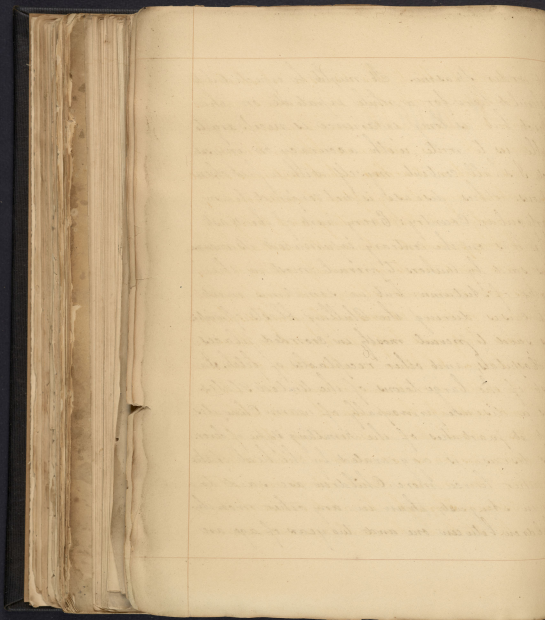
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Cholera Infantum.

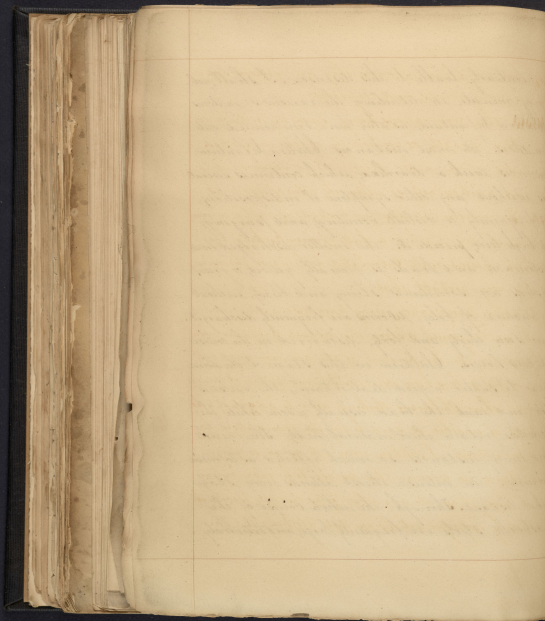
Of the history of Cholera Infantum, not much need be said: It has been so correctly pointed out by those who have written on the subject, and is so very uniform in its appearance, that it would be more than useless for me to quote the different authors who have illustrated its Character, in the respective Countries in which they practised. To avoid therefore useless details I shall confine myself to a few of those Authorities, who at the present day are, by general consent allowed to stand preminent. Cholera is derived from the greek word *χολη*, bile, and *πναιστος*, to flow, a genus of disease arranged by Cullen in the Class Nervous, and

Charles Johnson

and order Spasmodic. It might be expected that I should here for a while expatiate on the subject, but as long experience is necessary to enable us to write with accuracy on any subject, I shall content myself with a few observations. This disease is not confined to any particular Country: Every part of the West India has on the contrary experienced its ravages. It is said by authors to prevail most in the month of Autumn: but we sometimes meet with cases during the chilling blasts of winter. It is said to prevail mostly in crowded places as Hospitals, and other receptacles of fétid air, in most of the large towns of the United States. It is a disease principally of warm climates, and it partakes of the remitting type of fever. This disease is aggravated by the heat of the weather, hence more Children are said to die in August, than in any other month. Children between one and two years of age, are



are peculiarly liable to this disease. I shall not
be very minute in detailing the various symptoms
of Cholera Infantum, as they have been pointed out
by authors. In most instances Cholera Infantum
commences with a diarrhoea, which continues several
days without any other symptom of indisposition,
but frequently a violent vomiting, and purging,
and high fever precede it. The matter discharged from
the stomach and bowels is generally yellow or green,
the stools are sometimes slimy and bloody, without
any tincture of bile; worms are frequently discharged.
I have seen thirty and forty, discharged in the course
of a few hours. Children in this stage of the disease
appear to suffer a good deal of pain, the pulse is
quick and weak the head usually warm, while the
extremities retain their natural heat. The head
is in many instances so much affected as to produce
delirium, an intense thirst attends every stage
of the disease through the whole course of the
disease the stools are frequently large, and extremely



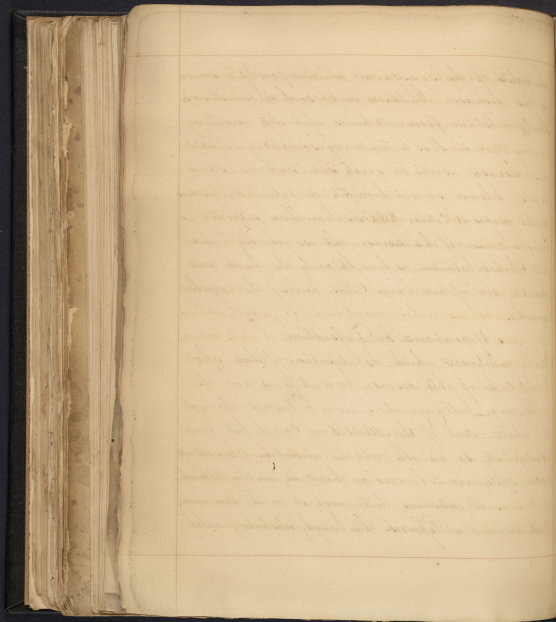
fectly, but in some instances they are without smell
and resemble drinks, and Urine.

Causes. they are various being, such as induce de-
bility either directly, or indirectly, of the intestines.
Vicissitudes of weather alternating from heat to
Cold, and particularly so when the Atmosphere is
moist. In warm climates and seasons, after extreme-
ly hot and dry weather a fall of rain cooling the
Atmosphere seems well calculated to bring on the disease,
and it is very probable, that moist air, which has
an obstructed perspiration, may have also a share in
this, tho we frequently observe the disease to appear when
no change in the temperature of the air nor any appli-
cation of Cold has been observed. The inattention of parents
to change their Childrens Clothing, and to adapt it to the
Vicissitudes of weather is said to lay the foundation for
Cholera Infantum. Ventilation may act as an exciting
Cause, hence we perceive this disease to be more violent
at that age than at any other. This disease is brought
into action by improper articles in diet, Clothing &c. The

the fruits of the season are a most prolific source of this disease. Children under such circumstances should abstain from all kinds of fruit, nothing in my opinion has a tendency so readily to produce this disease as the too great indulgence in our fruits. I have seen it brought on repeatedly by eating Apples grapes & Citrus. Worms have been suspected as being a cause of this disease. It is generally believed that Cholera infantum, is brought on by the heat and impure air of our large Cities, during the summer months.

Appearance on Dissection.

The appearances which the dissection of those who have died of this disease, present to us, are the following. Inflammation may be traced through the whole extent of the Stomachary Canal, but more particularly so in the mucous membrane, dark and livid spots are to be seen on the Esophagus, in the stomach, and small intestines, but more so in the duodenum, just below the Pylorus. the large intestines much



affected except in cases which go on to Dysentery
in this infrequently discover ulcerations, and. Also
the Liver is sometimes very much affected, in
protracted cases, being occasionally enlarged
to double its natural size. The Gall bladder is
usually distended with vitiated bile. The Pancreas
is occasionally affected, I have had several
opportunities of examining patients who have died
of Cholera Infantum, and have generally found all
the Abdominal viscera more or less affected, the
great intestines either mortified, or partly inflamed
and mortified. The mesenteric glands considerably
enlarged, and a number of livid spots
about the rectum.

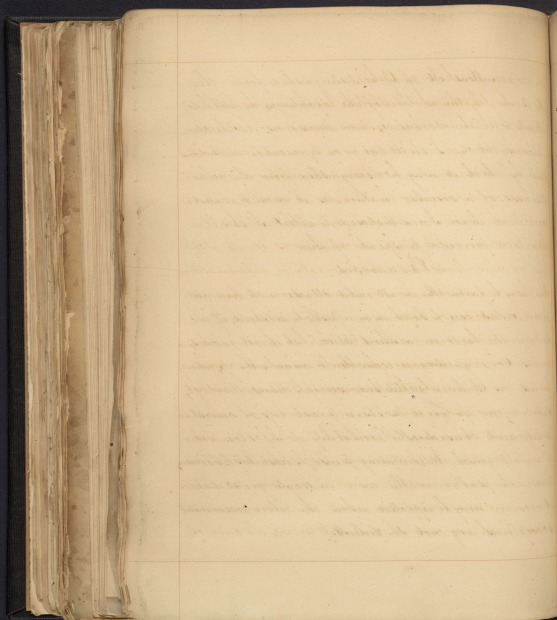
Diagnosis.

Almost all the diseases which infest the Alimentary
Canal, do in some measure bear an analogy to Cholera
Infantum, yet we can distinguish it from them with
facility. This we shall be able to do by inspecting the

the evacuations. It may be distinguished from the
Dysentery by the nature of the discharges, by not being
attended with Worms, and Tenesmus, in the com-
-monest form. I shall not go on to mention the tedious
route by which it may be distinguished from the other
diseases of a similar nature, as it would require
more time than I am disposed to allot. I shall
therefore proceed to speak of the

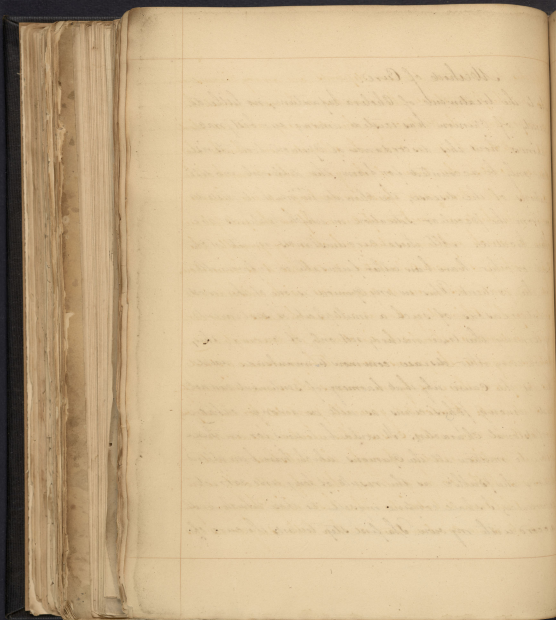
Prognosis.

This may be favourable in all mild attacks and even in
more violent ones a hope may justly be indulged, if we
subdue the fever in a short time, but if not, more se-
-rious Consequences are liable to ensue. Abscesses, many
forms as I have mentioned several times. Vertigo,
Syncope, in an erect posture great loss of muscular
power, and considerable irritability of the stomach,
a small quick intermitting pulse, subsultus tendinum,
these are unfavourable and indicate great danger.
A recovery may be expected when the above enumerated
symptoms are not so violent.

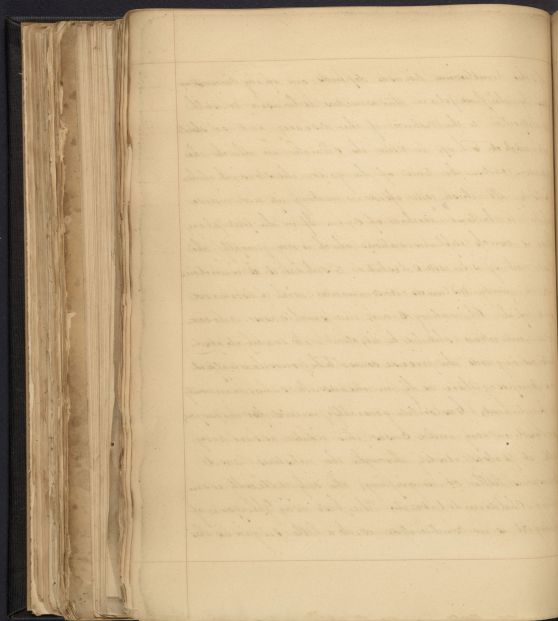


Methods of Cure.

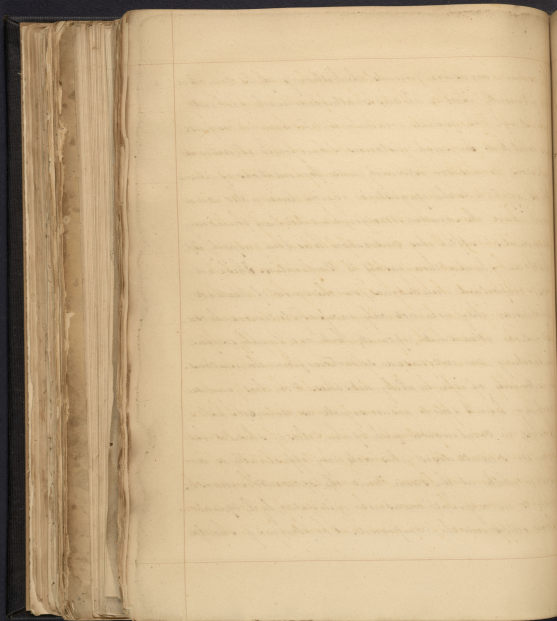
As to the treatment of Cholera Infantum, no little diversity of Opinion has existed among our best practitioners. How this discordance of Opinions took its rise can only be accounted for from the different modifications of the disease, the climate in which it existed or from the peculiar situation in which patients are often located. All these circumstances might at one time or other have been either favourable or unfavourable for the patient. This in my Opinion is one of the most potent reasons of such a multiplicity of sentiments concerning the true method, not only of curing, this, but of every other disease common to mankind. and this is the cause why that harmony of sentiment cannot exist among physicians as well as among other professional characters. It would be tedious for me therefore to mention all the Opinions which have been offered before the public as the results of long and correct experience, I shall confine myself to those which best accord with my own. The first step towards the cure of



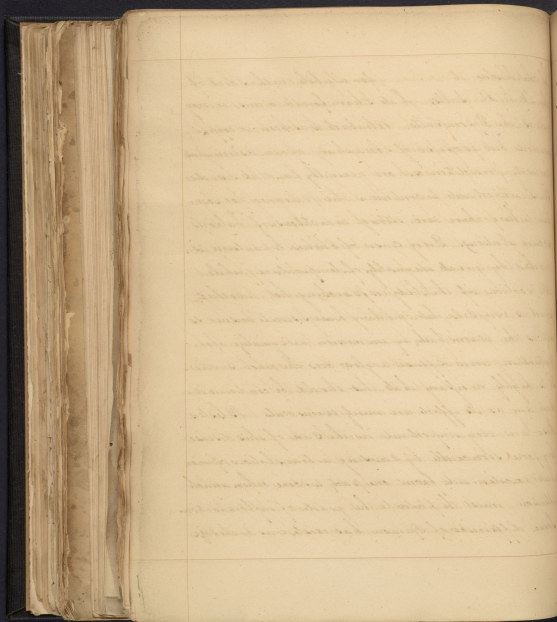
of this troublesome disease depends on many circumstances, in the first place the remedies to be used must be in proportion to the violence of the disease; and we should not neglect to keep in view the climate in which the disease exists the time of the year the strength of the patients, all these will assist in pointing up our minds relative to the true method of cure. If in the first place there is much inflammation which is very generally the case nothing is so well calculated to subdue it as mercurials but in many instances it commences with a disordered state of the Alimentary Canal in such cases our early endeavours should be directed to its evacuation but as regards the precise course to be pursued to effect this purpose, there is by no means the same unanimity of sentiment, Castoreum generally preferred for this purpose no doubt in very mild cases this would answer very well, it passes readily through the intestines and occasions little or no griping, the only difficulty is in getting Children to take it. The best way therefore of giving it is in combination with a little sugar as the



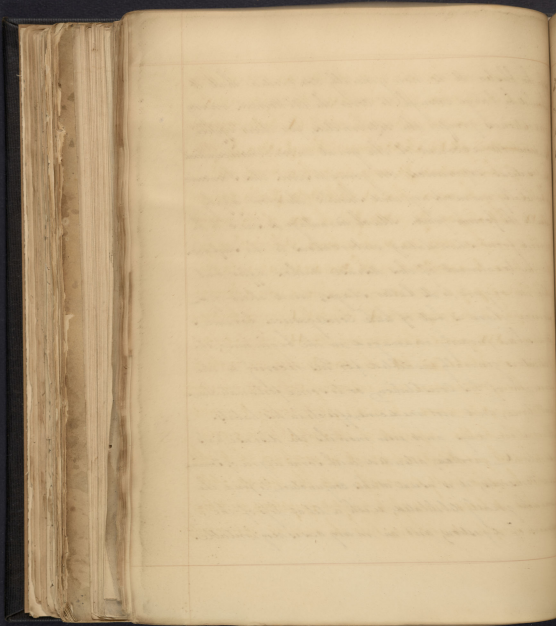
in some measure prevents the bitterness of the Oil. But
we frequently meet with cases attended with violent
vomiting! the patients vomiting up the medicine as fast
as exhibited. In such instances I have found the Anodyne
sufficient, to assuage extremely ugly fermentations of warm
Cloths, applied to the epigastric region, lime water and
milk, and the Sacchar Mixture, have all been found very
beneficial. After this indication has been properly ful-
filled we should then resort to Cathartics. These are
most important medicines in the cure of Cholera
Infantum; they are not only necessary to remove the con-
-stipation attendant upon it, but are highly useful
by exciting an increased secretion from the mucous
membranes of the healthy intestines. For this purpose
nothing have I seen to answer so well as the mercurial
purgers, in combination with Opium, these should be
given in small doses this acts very effectually as a
purgative while at the same time the spasmodic uncon-
-ness is in a great measure mitigated, by the Opium
which enters into the Compound. The purging should



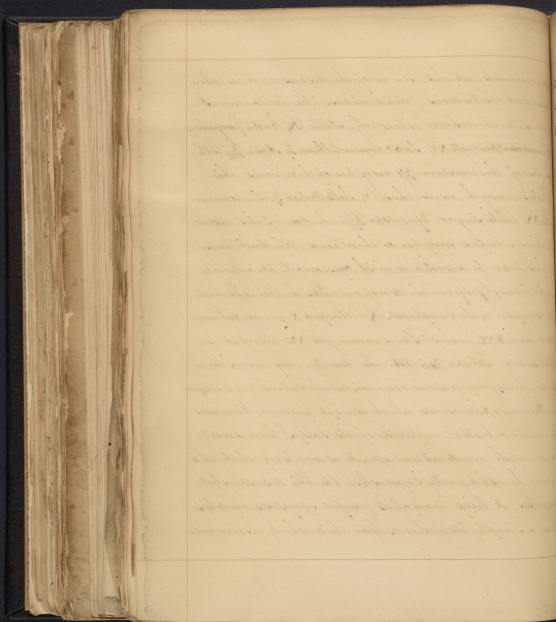
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be continued for a while, with some of
the Neutral Salts; what I have found to answer very
well is the Epsom Salts. Rhubarb has been recom-
mended but possessing something of an Astringent
property practitioners have generally laid it aside
It is important to continue the purging for some
time where there are strong indications of bilious
accumulation. Every case of Cholera Infantum is
marked by great inequality of temperature, while
one portion of the body is parching hot, another
part is very cold, here nothing has I seen to answer so
well as the warm bath, by immersion to equalize the
temperature, and diffuse a glow over the whole surface.
It is highly necessary that this should be continued
every day as its effects are much transient. Blisters
these are very important in the cure of this disease
they prove serviceable by causing a translocation of mor-
bid excrement from one part to some other much
attention must be paid to the grade of inflammation.
Some difference of Opinion has existed as to the size



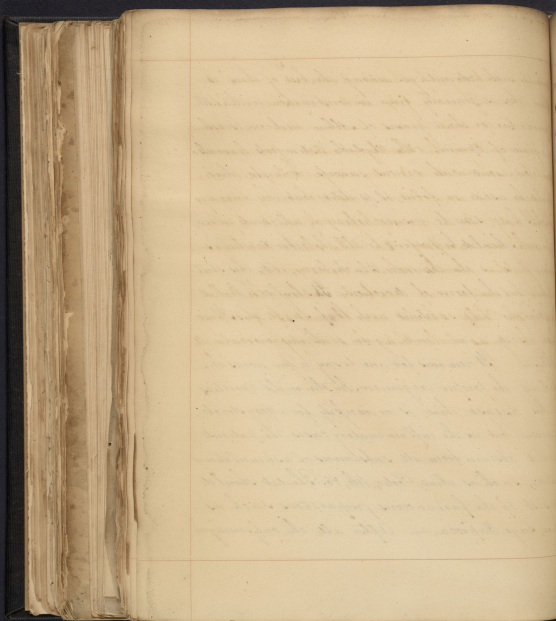
of the blister it is now generally conceded that it should be large enough to cover the Abdomen. many practitioners prefer the caustic, for their application on account of the great inconvenience which the patient experiences on going to stool. this I conceive to be totally unnecessary, and should, therefore, apply them to the former part. Much advantage is said to be derived from stimulating embrocations to the surface. In the treatment of this disease authors differ but little in regard to its latter stages, and their difference there is but of little consequence. For example if it has been properly managed in the beginning, the patient is generally enabled for his recovery to the strength of his Constitution, or to some fortunate change of time, and not medicine, effects in his habits. After a few days and even months the disease passes into a Dysentery, attended with some degree of tenesmus, and Hemorrhage, it is usual at this juncture, to find the stomach greatly debilitated, with a total loss of the powers of digestion and in many cases very irritable.



The remedies at this stage of the disease are the Alka-
lics and Costicous preparations. The following I
have seen to answer extremely well R Soda preparata
℥ij Laudanum ℥ss gtt. xv. Saccarum Album ℥j Aqua ℥ij M.
the dose of this mixture ℥j every two or three hours the
Alkalies may be used thus R Salts tartar ℥j Laudanum
gtt. xv. white Sugar ℥j water ℥ij. the dose of this mixture
a little spoonful every two or three hours. Rhubarb may
at this time be resorted to with considerable advantage
the following preparation is very much used this is admir-
ably adapted to the Complaint. R Rhubarb X grains balsam
Magnesia XXX grains Laudanum gtt. xv. Oil of Anise
gtt. iii or iv Water ℥ij M. the dose ℥j every two or three
hours these preparations are particularly calculated to relieve
the Fermina & Tenesmus, which are apt to occur. Enemas
of melted butter deprived of its salt, I have seen
used with great advantage it is necessary that this
should be used pretty copiously. As the disease still
progresses it loses most of its painful symptoms, and be-
comes a simple diarrhoea, here the mineral astingents

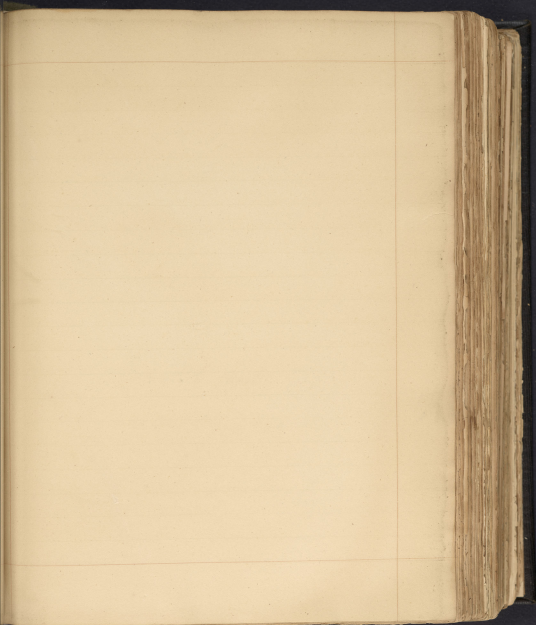


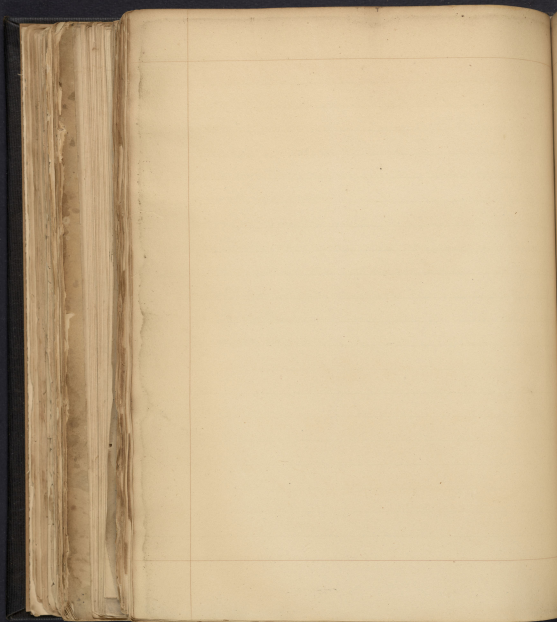
Come in with advantage. among the best of them is
 Alum. this is generally given in combination with a little
 Opium. two or three grains of Alum with one sixth
 of a grain of Opium. The Vegetable Astringents have also
 been tried, and with various success. Colomby this
 should be used in form of powder, but the remedy
 which I have seen to answer extremely well and in every
 Opinion should be preferred to all the other Vegetable
 Astringents is the common Black berry root, this should
 be given in the form of decoction. It should be boiled
 in vinegar and sweetened with loaf sugar. this I have
 seen used again and again with unequalled
 utility. — It remains for me to say a few words re-
 specting the proper regimen. In the mild varieties
 of this disease there is no necessity for a very strict
 regimen. but in the inflammatory cases the patient
 should abstain from all substances of a stimulating
 nature, such as wine, Porter, Ale, &c. The diet should
 consist of the farinaceous preparations such as
 Rice, Sage, Tapioca, — After all the only mercurial



15.
remedy, is a change of Climate or Air, so long as the
Child remains in the City, and is exposed to the
Operation of those Causes which produce the disease,
we may palliate, but hardly ever effect a permanent
Cure. In such a case a Country residence is preferable.
If prevent a disease so fatal in its occurrence, becomes
a high duty. for the accomplishing of which the follow-
ing rules are necessary. The Child should never be out
under twelve months, where a predisposition exists to
Cholera Infantum, until we should employ the Cold
bath. The Child should wear flannel. It is necessary
that the gums of the Child be scarified occasionally.

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Philadelphia

William H. Burleigh

Robert C. Cook

March 27th 1871

Philadelphia

